

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 791

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:

SUBJECT: ADS REQUEST - HOUGHTON MIFFLIN CO. BOSTON, MASS 02107

REF: CD-144 DATED SEPTEMBER 15, 1975, RECEIVED OCTOBER 22, 1975

1. EMBASSY HAS CONTACTED THE VENEZUELAN CHAMBER OF BOOK SELLERS WHICH SUPPLIED THE NAMES OF THE FIVE LEADING RETAILERS AND DISTRIBUTORS OF TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL BOOKS IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE. EACH OF THESE FIRMS WERE CONTACTED BY THE EMBASSY. ALL OF THEM CONSIDERED THEMSELVES HOUGHTON MIFFLIN "CUSTOMERS". NONE OF THEM EXPRESSED INTEREST IN AN EXCLUSIVE H-M SALES AGENT AGREEMENT. IT WAS THEIR UNANIMOUS OPINION THAT IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO NOMINATE ONE OF THEM AS AN EXCLUSIVE H-M AGENT. THE CONSENSUS OF THE BOOKSELLERS WAS THAT THIS WOULD BE LIKELY TO RESULT IN A REDUCTION IN VENEZUELAN SALES OF HOUGHTON-MIFFLIN BOOKS, ETC., BECAUSE; (1) NONE OF THEM ARE SET UP, OR INCLINED TO "PROMOTE" H-M BOOK SALES, AND CONVERSELY, THEY WOULD BE LIKELY TO FOREGO SALES WHICH REQUIRED PASSING AN ORDER THROUGH A LOCAL AGENT TO OBTAIN A BOOK FROM A FOREIGN PUBLISHER. (2) THE NAMING OF AN EXCLUSIVE DISTRIBUTOR WOULD, IN THEIR OPINION, COMPLICATE THE DISTRIBUTION NETWORK AND RESULT IN HIGHER FINAL RETAIL COSTS FOR H-M BOOKS. IT APPEARS THAT THERE IS A "GENTLEMEN'S AGREEMENT" AMONG THESE FIRMS NOT TO INTERVENE IN THE BILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS THAT PRESENTLY EXIST BETWEEN PUBLISHERS AND BOOKSELLERS.

2. IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE, HOUGHTON MIFFLIN MAY WISH TO RECONSIDER THEIR REQUEST. IF FURTHER CONTACTS WITH POTENTIAL AGENTS ARE REQUESTED, THE EMBASSY WILL CONTACT BOOK DISTRIBUTORS OTHER THAN THOSE REFERENCED ABOVE WHO MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN ENTERING UNCLASSIFIED

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THE FIELD OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE BOOK WHOLESALE DISTRIBUTION.

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